

Ms. Elena Brineman's Speech
Closing Ceremony Of Agriculture And Forest Recuperation Project In Santiago

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to be at this closing ceremony of the Agriculture and Forest Recuperation Project, once destroyed by Hurricane Georges in Jarabacoa. Many farms were destroyed by the atmospheric phenomenon, causing many agricultural damage and therefore, to the country's economy. It also affected the lives of many Dominican farmers, in particular coffee plantations.

Today, thanks to USAID's funds and technical assistance to this project and joined forces with ISA, the Plan Cordillera and the Junta Yaque, along with the active participation of villagers, 25 communities affected by the hurricane are today restored.

We are very pleased knowing that 178 hectares were rehabilitated with the soil conservation technique; 880 farmers received technical assistance and training on agroforestry; 6 green houses were reinstalled; and 137 coffee hectares were rehabilitated and that the actual coffee production is organic on renewed soil conditions and preserving the environment.

I congratulate everyone involved in this program that made this project a success story. Also, thanks to the coffee farmers for producing higher quality coffee apt to compete in the global market.

I am glad that you were open to new initiative that several NGOs, private sector, community groups, small farmers, merchants, coffee planters and the government are promoting in marketing specialty coffee through the Dominican Association of Specialty Coffee (ADOCAFES) and the Dominican Coffee Council (CODOCAFE).

I encourage you to take advantage of technology, such as Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geo-especial Information System (GIS), that will allow you to get computerized data from your farms and fellow farmers, along with the establishment of computerized information about the country (Clearinghouse and Meta datos) and the Web page that is being prepared by the U.S. Geological System (USGS). This will help you participate and compete into more attracting international markets.

Thank you for inviting me to this celebration.